



# ***RETIREE***

**Cannon Air Force Base New Mexico**

**Col Stephen Clark, 27 Special Operations Wing Commander**

**Col James Cardoso, 27 Special Operations Wing Vice Commander**

**Second Qtr 2010**

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## **RETIREE**

I am a military retiree and veteran. Some say military retirees are the cream of the crop, aged to perfection. Uncle Sam invested a lot of taxes in us, his best creation, starting with basic training, moving to professional education, ultimately management and supervisory training. This results in a unique vision of the military's place in global affairs. Retirees have wider knowledge than that of other "vets", often understanding the challenges of Joint Force Operations, which helps to make sense of today's headlines.

Retirees are more often more educated in the ways of the military, than those who spurned a career, through mandatory military education courses earning credits toward diplomas, and opportunity for advancement while serving, which for the most part, the civilian world does not offer. Retirees enjoy benefits which they have earned by pulling themselves up through their own initiatives.

Due to their long service retirees are generally more decorated, having not only more time in which to train and serve, but earned through accepting greater fields of responsibilities and opportunities. They have traveled more, moved more, and have served under more forms of leadership, a motivator, while many single-termers become discouraged,

In time of war, when the nations needs have been the direst, it has been the career service member who was on hand to develop, implement plans for training, mobilizing, and winning. It was the career soldiers, airmen, sailors and marines who took untrained men and women turning them into the combat ready force required to protect our country and way of life. It has been said every veteran owes a debt of gratitude to the career military person. The career person kept up traditions of dress, courtesy, respect, honors, and oral tradition.

What is the difference between a military retiree and a veteran? There are just over 2 million retirees, while there are 30 million veterans in the United States. Perhaps a definition of a retiree might be, a career military person giving up active participation by years of service in that career, but the distinguishing differences are the benefits and entitlements the retiree has earned by virtue of sustained government service. The Department of Defense defines a veteran as "anyone who has served honorably for a minimum of 180 days", essentially; anyone who made it through basic military training, including retirees, can be classified a "veteran."

### **Items of interest**

**ID card copying:** Tricare health matters-12 March 2010. With identity theft on the rise, it is understandable to feel a little uncomfortable with ID card copying. According to Title 18 United States Code; section 701, photocopying or possession of a card is only illegal if used in an unauthorized manner. To use your Tricare benefits, you must have a valid uniformed services ID card and be registered in the Defense Enrollment Eligibility Reporting System (DEERS). Children under the age of 10 can usually use either their parent's or guardian's ID card but they must be registered in DEERS. At age 10, children should have their own ID card. Your Tricare provider's office is authorized to make a copy of your military or family member ID card or Tricare Prime enrollment card, be assured it is not against the rules. Tricare recommends that providers photocopy your enrollment card as well as the front and back of your military ID card. Although it is not

required for treatment, your enrollment card contains important about you that your provider needs for referral, authorization and claims filing purposes.

**Vietnam Veterans Day:** Information received from New Mexico Department of Veterans Services indicates there are approximately 52,011 Vietnam Veterans in New Mexico. Several state legislatures, California, Ohio, Minnesota, as well as cities in other states have been persuaded to designate a Vietnam Veterans Day. I contacted the Secretary of New Mexico Department of Veterans Services asking if such legislation has been put forth in New Mexico and was advised that such legislation was passed last year designating a Vietnam Veterans Tribute Day and a proclamation will be issued encouraging communities to honor Vietnam Veterans.

**No Tricare hike in 2011 budget request:** AFRNS: Tricare recipients will see no increase in their premiums next year if Congress approves that provision of the fiscal 2011 budget request, as expected. Defense Secretary Robert Gates told reporters Feb 21 that he wants to with Congress to find ways to help control escalating military health-care costs that are consuming an ever increasing chunk of the budget. "Its only going to go up" with Military Health Systems officials estimating 5 to 7 percent annual cost increases through fiscal 2015. "And it is absorbing an increasing percentage of our budget." Officials predict that the program will grow from 6% to 10% of the defense budget. "We absolutely want to take care of our men and women in uniform and our retirees," Secretary Gates said, "but at some point, there has to be a reasonable tradeoff between reasonable cost increases or premium increases or co-pays or something and the cost of the program." There has been no Tricare premium increase since the program was founded in 1995, Secretary Gates said, adding that Congress has rejected recent Pentagon proposals for "very modest" increases. Expecting the same action this year, the Defense Department recommended not increase, he said. "I ask anyone to point me to a health insurance program that has not had a premium increase in 15 years." The Military Health System has 9.5 million eligible beneficiaries, including active duty members and their families, military retirees and their families, dependent survivors and certain eligible reserve component members and their families. The General Accountability Office recently found that more than 85% of retirees ages 45-49 and half of retirees between 60-64 had access to other group health insurance, but chose Tricare instead. As Tricare usage increases, so does the number of health care visits that beneficiaries make, official noted. Between fiscal 2005 and 2008, the average number of outpatient visits increased from 8.7 to 9.97, with pharmacy increasing 5.5% over the same timeframe.

**ID card numbers:** (Afterburner) Phase two of the process to remove printed Social Security numbers from retiree identification card set to begin early this year has been delayed until further notice. When a new plan is made available to the services, information will be advertised through Air Force Retiree News outlets. People are required to present two forms of identification, one being an unexpired federal or state issued photo ID.

**VA seeks 125 billion for veterans in 2011:** (Washington AFRNS) To expand health care to a record number of veterans, reduce the number of homeless Veterans and process a dramatically increased number of new disability compensation claims, a \$125 billion budget is proposed next year for the Department of Veterans affairs. The 125 billion request, which has to be approved by Congress, includes \$60.3 billion for discretionary spending, mostly for health care, and \$64.7 billion in mandatory funding, mostly disability

compensation and pensions. Secretary Shinseki said the proposal provides resources necessary to continue aggressive pursuit of the presidents two over arching goals for veterans. "First the budget will help transform VA into a 21<sup>st</sup> century organization, and second it will ensure that we approach veterans' care as a lifetime initiative, from the day they take their oaths until the day they are laid to rest." "VA 2011 budget request covers many areas but focuses on three central issues that are of critical importance to our veterans - - easier access to benefits and services, faster disability claims decisions, and ending the downward spiral that results in Veterans' homelessness."

**Tricare University offers benefit education:** (AFRNS) If you are new to Tricare and want to learn about your health care benefits or just an old hand who wants to know the latest changes, Tricare University is the place to go. Tricare University offers free online courses 24 hours a day, seven days a week, 365 a year at [www.tricare.mil/tricareu](http://www.tricare.mil/tricareu), and click "online training." "The courses can be taken anytime and learn at your own pace" said Rear Admiral Christine Hunter, deputy director of Tricare Management Activity. Of the different courses, the Tricare Public course provides the quickest and easiest way to get a general overview and basic knowledge of Tricare programs, there is no registration required for this course and it is accessible to anyone who wants to know more about Tricare. The Tricare Fundamentals Course is much more in depth as it is primarily designed to benefit counselors and family support staff who provide counseling and assistance to Tricare beneficiaries. Topics covered include Tricare eligibility, Tricare programs and plans and online resources. Registration is needed to take this course and "graduates" who pass the test at the end of the course receive a certificate from Tricare.

**Commissary**

**784-4330**

**Closed Monday and day following a calendared holiday**

**Hours of Operation:**

**Tuesday-Friday 0900-1700**

**Saturday 0900-1800**

**Sunday 1000-1700**

**2nd quarter store information**

<b>Apr 1-7</b>	<b>baking up great sales</b>
<b>Apr 8-21</b>	<b>blooming savings</b>
<b>Apr 22-May 5</b>	<b>energy efficient savings/dollar days</b>
<b>May 6-19</b>	<b>Case lot sale</b>
<b>May 20-Jun 9</b>	<b>remembering the Military sale</b>
<b>Jun 10-23</b>	<b>LPL heroes sale</b>
<b>Jun 24-Jul 7</b>	<b>Grand "Ole Flag sales event</b>

**The Landing and End Zone**

**784-2853/784-4283**

**Hours of Operation**

**Monday-Friday open for lunch 1100-1300**

**Wednesday-Friday Casa de Falcon Dining Room opens 5pm-8pm**

**Fridays till 9pm**

**Social Hour every Friday 6pm-7pm**

Refueling Pit Wednesday-Thursday 4pm-9pm, Friday-Saturday 3pm-1am  
Tumbleweed Lounge opens Friday only 4pm-11pm  
Brunch monthly; refer to Horizon Magazine for details

**Members**

E1-E3            \$4  
E4-E9            \$6

Officers and qualified civilians \$13

**Change of address**

**All retiree, SBP, RSFPP, surviving spouse payments** should be sent to below listed addresses, which are contractor that scans the written request as a computer image and transmits it to DFAS. Include your social security and that of your deceased spouse.

**Annuitant Pay**

Defense Finance and Accounting Service  
U.S. Military Annuitant Pay  
PO Box 7131  
London KY 40742-7131  
800-321-1018  
216-522-5955  
Fax 800-982-8459

**Retired pay**

Defense Finance and Accounting Service  
U.S. Military Retirement Pay  
PO Box 7130  
London KY 40742-7130  
800-321-1080  
216-522-5955  
Fax 800-522-6550

Submit **COPIES** rather than originals, documents **CANNOT/WILL NOT BE RETURNED**

**Air Force Instruction 91-207 1 October 1995**

**THE US AIR FORCE TRAFFIC SAFETY PROGRAM**

**Section C- Occupant Protection and Vehicle Requirements**

5) All people in a moving motor vehicle on Air Force installations or off an installation using a vehicle for conduct of Air Force business must ensure operability and use of available installed occupant protective devices (restrains, air bags, child safety seats..Etc) required by the Code of

Federal Regulations, Part 571, Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards.

5.1) Comply with local occupant protective device laws. Installation traffic safety program shall be consistent with the State and local child safety seat requirements. Installation traffic safety program shall specify age, weight, or other criteria for child safety seats use. If state or host-nation child restraint laws conflict with these instructions, apply the most stringent guidance.

5.2) Vehicles of model years 1965 and newer must have installed occupant protective devices within the passenger compartment of the vehicle. Vehicles manufactured before 1965 must have occupant restraints installed if required by host-state or nation laws.

**Swift as the wind  
Silent as the forest  
Conquer like the fire  
Unmovable as the mountain  
Freedom is not free**